A. C. F. R. 8

G. D. NAIDU'S SPEECHES

Transport—1

Compiled by
S. GAJENDRAN,
Coimbatore.

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WELCOME ADDRESS

Presented to the

Hon. Sir ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL,

Member, Executive Council, Madras
and
President, Automobile Association
of Southern India

on the occasion of the

Inauguration of the new fleet of

BEDFORD BUSES

by the

UNITED MOTORS (CBE) LTD., COIMBATORE

on

3—7—1933

To

The Hon. Sir ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL

K. C. I. E., C. S. I., C. B. E., V. D., I. C. S.

Sir,

I have invited you this morning to inaugurate our new fleet of Bedford buses. I will give a brief account of our Company.

In 1920 I purchased my first bus from Messrs. Stanes and Co., Coimbatore and drove it myself. Gradually business prospered and I bought more buses and formed the following companies:—

i. Coimbatore Transport Ltd.,
ii. Pollachi Transport Ltd.,
iii. Trichur - Pollachi Transport Ltd.,
iv. Modern Bus Service Ltd.,
v. Varadaraja Motors Ltd.,
vi. Modern Motor Service,
vii. Umamaheswara Motor Service,
viii. Union Bus Ltd.,
ix. "D" Engineering Ltd. and
x. Importers Ltd.

The buses of the above companies run in the Districts of Coimbatore, Malabar, Madura and in the Cochin State touching more than 60 important places. In 1931-32, we had 110 buses, which ran

14,000 miles and carried 4000 passengers daily. Today we have on the road only 95 buses on account of the reduction of some timings. The Staff consists of about 550 persons, who are paid monthly about Rs. 15,000 as wages and batta. We pay in a year about Rs. 1,50,000 as Provincial Tax, District Board and License fees, etc.

Among our distinguised visitors during the last three years were Sir M. Krishnan Nair Kt. (Law Member), Messrs H. A. B. Vernon C. S. I., C. B. E., (1st Member of the Board of Revenue), P. T. Rajan (Minister to the Government of Madras), S. H. Slater C. M. G., C. I. E., I. C. S., (Secretary to Government) and F. G. Luker M. L. C., Diwan Bahadur C. S. Ratnasabapathy Mudaliar (Municipal Chairman and District Board President, Coimbatore), the Hon. Sir R. K. Shanmukham Chettiar K. C. I. E., (President, Legislative Assembly), Sir K. V. Reddi, Kt., Diwan Bahadur B. Muniswami Naidu Garu (Ex-Chief Minister to the Government of Madras) and Rao Bahadur A. V. Govinda Menon (District and Sessions Judge, Coimbatore.) They were, I am glad to state, very pleased with what they saw.

On 15—9—1932, the Road-Rail Committee paid us a surprise visit and went round our Head Office, workshops, garages and bus stands. They were well impressed with what they saw of our regular running services to fixed timings. We provide the public with good and reliable service of buses at a cheap rate on all important roads radiating from this town. Mr D. J. Minahan, General Manager of the Continental Tyre and Rubber Co.,

Bombay, after examining very closely our services, remarked, that we are the best organised motor service in India, Burma and Ceylon. This praise from one, who has much experience in motor trade in India, Burma and Ceylon is a compliment, which we highly value.

Our fleet hitherto consisted of only American buses (110 Dodge and 10 Chevrolet). I am now giving English Bedford buses a trial as when I visited England in 1932, I was greatly impressed with the efficiency and durability of English motors.

After my return from the World tour in December, 1932, I consulted some of the local officers with a view to arrange for running buses with a maximum convenience to passengers as in Western countries and without competition with the Railways and among the bus owners themselves. They told me that this could not be done unless the bus owners formed a Union. I accordingly approached many bus owners and they agreed to a Union being formed; this was accomplished on 1st April 1933. To give as much convenience as possible to the travelling public, the Union decided to put a new fleet of buses on the roads and the 40 Bedford buses now purchased are the first of our new fleet. The Union now consists of 9 limited Companies, which have many individual bus owners as partners and I have accepted the management as Managing Agent.

There is an impression that buses run in competition with the Railways. This is not so. The buses do not compete with the Railways, but

on the other hand, they try to co-ordinate with the Railways. The main reason for thinking that the buses compete with the Railways is because the Railway companies and bus owners are not in touch with each other as in other countries. If they can get together, I doubt whether there is any necessity for any Road-Rail enquiry and the proposed bill.

I am fortunate, Sir, to get you, the President of the Automobile Association of Southern India, to preside over this function. I feel very grateful to you, for having come all this way in the midst of your multifarious duties. I know that your coming here to-day is at great personal inconvenience and that you have to return to Ootacamund immediately after this function is over to attend to urgent business. Finally we beg you to continue to help the bus transports in this presidency.

This year we have alloted Rs. 3000 to be distributed among our staff, who are efficient, honest and hard working. This sum will be paid out by the end of this official year. We are now awarding gold and silver medals and certificates of merit to the following persons for meritorious and long service:—

Gold Medals

1. Driver K. Arumugham,
2. „ A. Rayappan,
3. „ M. Natesan,
4. „ G. Narayanaswami,
5. Foreman T. Manikkam Pillai,
6. „ K. Srinivasa Ayyar.

Silver Medals

1. Driver A. Muniswami,
2. „ P. Velan,
3. „ M. Raju Pillai,
4. Foreman M. Srinivasa Rao.

Certificates of Merit

1. Driver K. Ramaswami Pillai,
2. „ K. Kasturi,
3. „ N. Kasturi,
4. „ A. Susaiappan,
5. „ D. Perumal Pillai,
6. „ Venkataswami Rowth,
7. „ N. Subbayya Pillai,
8. „ R. Venkaswamy Rao,
9. „ Kolandaswamy Mudaliar.

I now request you, Sir, to kindly inaugurate our new fleet of buses.

I beg to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

G. D. Naidu.

Coimbatore,
3—7—1933.

REPLY OF

The Hon. Sir ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL.

I believe that the development of means of communication is one of the best methods of improving the position of the people of the country particularly in rural parts, for, on the cheapness of the means of transport depended in the first place the amount of profit which the agriculturists could make out of the produce of their lands. If they had to bring their produce along country roads, possibly through black cotton soil, for many miles obviously they could not take such heavy loads in their carts and they would have to pay more to get their produce to the market than if they could send their produce quickly and easily to the market. There is undoubtedly very great advantage to be derived from such a large organisation as this company here. I am sure the company would be well managed. Otherwise the company would be bound to go to the wall before long. It was bound to keep up an efficient work-shop for the maintenance of the buses in proper order. No one would feel inclined to charge excessive fares, but at the same time they would see that their charges were such that they could obtain a reasonable return upon their outlay. A company of this kind was rendering a real service to the public in the area in which it worked.

Road-Rail Competition.

The question of the competition with the railways was one which had recently come under the serious consideration of the Government of India and the local Governments. I am quite sure that everyone did not share Mr Naidu's opinion that motor buses did not run in competition with railways. On the other hand, a great deal had been said on the other side in recent times. But one thing that did come out of the rail-road inquiry was that it was desirable that there should be organisations such as this company, because then, it was very much easier for the railway companies to deal with bus services and for the two to co-operate together.

Mr Naidu had, I believe, made recommendations to the Government regarding the rules relating to motor buses in particular. And coming as they did from one with so much experience, those representations of his had received very careful consideration at the hands of the Government. The Government, I might say, were anxious to encourage motor transport of this nature when run on proper lines and Government was ready to listen to any reasonable proposals, which might be made for the improvement of roads or facilities for such organisations as this. I trust that the example of this district might be followed in other districts and that similar organisations running on sound lines might spring up elsewhere.

Mr Naidu had referred to the fact that I am the President of the Automobile Association of

Southern India. In that capacity I was brought into touch with owners of motor buses and lorries and what was generally known as commercial vehicles. I thought that the fact that a member of the Government was able to hold such a position as this, indicated that the Government did what they could do to encourage this particular form of transport. The fact that I held that position and so came into close touch with owners of motor vehicles enabled Government to realise and appreciate the difficulties which they were put to.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate Mr Naidu on the success, which has attended his efforts for the organisation of the present company and would like to offer him also my best wishes for his continued success in future and I trust that the present motor buses would be able to work satisfactorily.

WELCOME ADDRESS

Presented to

MR G. T. BOAG C.I.E., I.C.S.,

Secretary to the Government of Madras

by

MR G. D. NAIDU

on the occasion of the

OPENING FUNCTION

of

U. M. S. BUS JUNCTION

at

PALLADAM

on

30—6—1935.

To

MR G. T. BOAG C.I.E., I.C.S.,

Secretary to the Government of Madras.

Dear Sir,

I thank you sincerely for consenting to come here to perform the Opening Function of our New Bus Junction Buildings. I have the honour to have become acquainted with you during Motor Vehicles Rules Revision Committee sittings.

I shall be failing in my duty if I do not take this opportunity to express the deep sense of gratitude, the motor and bus owners owe to you for the services you have rendered as President of the Motor Vehicles Rules Revision Committee. By your valuable advice and suggestions in that committee, you have greatly relieved the bus owners and the travelling public of the inconveniences they suffer on account of defects in Motor Vehicles Rules. You have recommended to the Government to reduce the present exorbitant fee charged for obtaining mere Brake Certificates, and that it should be only a nominal fee. When the New Motor Vehicles Rules come into force, thanks to your efforts, the motoring public and the bus owners will greatly appreciate your services.

I have here an opportunity to show you, in detail, practically and personally, the points discussed in the Motor Vehicles Rules Revision Committee.

I thank you again most heartily for having found time to come over here and perform this function in the midst of your arduous engagements.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I may be allowed to say a few words with regard to the beginning of my bus service.

Although my father had sufficient property, he took very little pains to educate me on account of my playful and mischievous nature. I learnt something in Tamil in the old fashioned village pial school and of course I had no English education. As a young man I wanted to follow my father's line of cotton business, trading independently, but after a time, I realised that I had to face losses often, though I was successful many times, and that losses were due to want of education and experience. About that time, the then Settlement Officer Mr J. K. Lancashire I.C.S. took a personal interest in instructing me in the mechanism of motor cycles etc. As I was ignorant of the English language, I could not study the ABC of motor mechanism and all the instructions I could get were only oral. Then some friends like Sir Robert Stanes, Mr L. J. Dee and Mr P. E. Perry advised me to run a motor bus transport as it would be of public utility and would also be paying. I purchased a bus accordingly and began to drive it myself. This gave me practical experience and I gained more and more knowledge of motor mechanism.

About that time, I travelled in a service bus from Madura to Devakotta. That trip gave me many ideas for improvement in the bus transport business. I noticed the bus driven rashly and the conductor of the bus behaving rudely towards the

passengers. At a certain place the bus stopped and all the passengers went away. I alone remained in the bus and observed the driver and the conductor sharing the swindled money from that day's collection through non-issue of tickets etc. They were hatching plans for robbing the owner of the bus in other ways too. From that day's experience I realised that a bus owner's failure is due to:—

(a) Rash driving resulting in quick wear of parts.

(b) Rude behaviour of drivers and conductors towards passengers. The public begin to hate bus service on account of this rude behaviour and consequently there is a reduction in collections day by day.

(c) Swindling of a portion of the collections by the staff.

These reasons are known to all, but it is very difficult for everyone to find them out in actual experience. I appointed Checking Inspectors, but they too at times joined hands with drivers and conductors. To counteract this, printed forms were introduced for obtaining passengers' remarks, but passengers refrained from making adverse remarks on those forms, fearing ill-treatment by drivers and conductors.

In a few cases, the drivers and conductors fail to afford convenience to passengers on account of practical difficulty and complaints are made against these drivers and conductors. A notice was

published that if the passengers had any complaint they might note it either in the memo forms or separately send it by unpaid post. For a few days, true complaints were received by post and we did not grudge paying double postal charges. But soon a set of mischievous drivers and conductors began to post unpaid covers with blank papers inside. Consequently that system was changed and whenever passengers had any complaint, they were required to report the matter to the Managers at starting places or at destinations, with co-passengers as witnesses. If, on enquiry, the staff was found driving the bus rashly, and behaving rudely towards passengers, or swindling cash, a reward of Rs. 5 was to be given to the complainant. This rule is still in force and I am happy to remark that the misbehaviour towards passengers has been on the decrease. Still the public have a misplaced sympathy for the staff and many complaints are not brought to our notice. Another rule, which I have introduced, is that if no complaints are made against a driver or conductor for six months, his pay will be raised by Rs. 10, whereas for each complaint a fine of Rs. 50 to Rs. 100 will be levied. While imposing the fine a condition is added that the fine will be refunded and a present given in addition, if no such complaints are received against that person for a period of six months. Majority of the staff have got refund of such fines by their redeemed good conduct.

With the above rules in force I used to travel in buses incognito. I shall quote some of the interesting instances I have come across.

(i) Once Rao Saheb Dr. T. A. Raja, Mr M. Parameswaran Chettiar, Municipal Councillor, Coimbatore, and myself got down from train at Dindigal, at 10 o'clock, in the night, and went to our booking office to know how the passengers were accommodated. We found the watchman in charge of the office just leaving the premises with a lady friend of his, leaving everything in the office unattended. There was nobody to take care of the office throughout that night.

(ii) On another occasion, I alighted from the mail train at Erode, went to our booking office incognito and took my seat in one of the buses. I found the Proprietor of Pakshirajan Motor Service sleeping in the next bench. The bus started, was driven at a speed of 40 miles, and at a certain place on account of heavy jolting, he was thrown down from his seat and had an injury on the back. He got up with difficulty and sat on the bench. At Avanashi, I alighted without anybody's knowledge and went to the Tahsildar's house. The same bus came there, and to my query whether he drove it at a high speed, the driver replied in the negative and, to prove his honesty, cited the passengers as witnesses. All the passengers, including the Proprietor of Pakshirajan Service, vehemently supported the driver. At last I had to ask the Proprietor of Pakshirajan Service about the injury on his back and then he admitted the rash driving. I am giving this as an illustration how even bus owners try to shield rash driving.

(iii) Smoking is prohibited in buses and once I myself violated the order and the smoke was directed towards the conductor, when I was travelling incognito. The ash and the fire of the cigarette were thrown on the conductor. He did not make any complaint. Again, under my instructions, one of my friends occupied the conductor's seat, and refusing to give up the seat picked up a quarrel instead and gave the conductor two blows, besides. It may seem strange, yet the conductor did not retaliate as one of the conditions of the company agreement is not so to retaliate anyone, who abuses or assaults. He was given an extra present that year for strictly adhering to the company's rules.

(iv) At one time many complaints were received about the missing of articles from buses. To find out the truth, I used to travel incognito, with valuable and fancy articles such as silk cloths, shirts, sweets, tiffin, brandy bottles, cigarettes etc., and alight from the buses leaving them behind. When purchasing tickets I used to pay in excess of the scheduled rates without receiving the balance. Myself or some of my friends would be carefully watching. Increments of pay and bonus were given to those, who were honest.

(v) Arrangements are made with friends for secret information allotting them certain alphabets instead of their names. They are to purchase tickets for travelling and to report about the conduct of the members of the staff. Some Government servants are also helping in this direction and my thanks are due to them as such help makes a service efficient.

Again, arrangements are made to prevent accidents and maintain regular timings. Care is taken to insist upon the driver and conductor to check 96 items including tools before going on the line.

At one time there had been too many accidents, and a blunt order was issued that any driver causing any part of the bus, other than wheels and tyres, to touch or dash against persons, any other article, animal, or any object, would be summarily dismissed. On appeal the previous records of defaulting drivers were perused and deserving hands were placed under suspension only for a short period. On account of this order cases were reduced by 90% in 1934 compared with 1929.

Coming to the improvement and laying down the rules for the conduct of my office staff, I owe a debt of gratitude to Mr Santhappa Pillai; who had given me his valuable services. He was then a Circle Inspector of Police, now retired. He took leave for some time and acted as General Manager, putting the office in order and training the staff. He has thoroughly impressed upon the mind of the staff the necessity to be honest, both by precept and his personal example.

Thus, the development of this bus transport is due to the kind help and guidance of Messrs. J. K. Lancashire I.C.S., Sir Robert Stanes, L. J. Dee, P. E. Perry and Santhappa Pillai. In the death of Mr V. Arunachalam Chettiar, Vice Chairman, Coimbatore Municipality, and Director, United

Motors, three years ago, I have lost a good friend and an influential Director. Mr L. E. Hurtis, Retired Deputy Collector, joined our company as General Manager in 1930, and by his sincere service and genial nature, endeared himself to one and all of us. His death in the beginning of this year is a great loss to the company.

Alongwith the world trade depression, the bus transport services also suffered and there was a heavy loss. I thought of winding up the business, not willing to undertake unprofitable risk and hardship. My few personal wants could be satisfied within eight annas to a rupee a day; that was my motive but I had to think of the five hundred and more of the families depending upon me for their maintenance. So the business was kept running, and I had to bear a liability of two lakhs of rupees. On another occasion on account of ill-health, I decided to set apart a share for each driver by entrusting him with a bus. I experimented this policy on a road, but unfortunately, due to want of education, the drivers fell out with one another, so much so, there were 17 criminal cases in a month's time..

In my foreign tour, I was specially engaged in observing the behaviour of drivers, conductors, police officers and the public. Italy, France, Germany, United States and Japan are not up to the level in observing the road laws as England. Of course in India, the majority of people are ignorant of road manners and they can, in no way, be compared with modern advanced nations. I find the

people of Malabar are far better than those of the other districts and the number of accidents in Malabar was the lowest some years back. But when comparing the number of buses, milcs and accidents, the severe steps taken in the matter of accidents, Coimbatore has the least number of accidents. Again comparing the figures of 1934 with those of 1929-30, it will be seen that accidents have gone down by 90%. Taking the number of vehicles, miles and population into account, it will be seen that, allowing one inch of road for a car mile there in England, there may be more than 10 inches in India for a car mile. When there is so much facility the number of accidents should necessarily decrease in India still more, and this can happen only if the drivers and the public are educated. I wish that our Indian brothers and sisters would develop the road sense and the system prevailing in England.

In this world, a man of average intelligence and knowledge can be trained to manage an existing organisation or a company. But the management of a bus transport company is unique by itself and it is very difficult to manage it, at the same time looking to the convenience of the public. I am sure my friends here will not mistake my intention, when I say that in Western Countries I have found honesty, straightforwardness, and a sense of duty developed to a great extent, and in India, for want of educated staff, it is not an exaggeration if I say that some of the conductors and drivers would be in the list of habitual criminals if only they had a chance. It is easier to manage 50,000 of an

educated staff than direct and control 50 drivers and conductors. Added to this, the mischief played by a few Government subordinates makes it much more difficult to manage them. Even if we hope to rectify these defects, unfortunately for India, the political situation has made the bus owners' job unbearable. The Congress man thinks that the bus is a nuisance and a parasite upon the wealth of India. He wants to avoid it as the motor bus comes from foreign countries, and mainly uses foreign materials like petrol, tyre etc. The non-co-operator believes that the bus owner is helping the Government in taking the police etc., to places where there is political unrest During the non-co-operation days, for the simple reason that the police used our buses, there was propaganda started by some mischievous political agitators against our service. They advised people not to travel in U. M. S. buses and in certain places stones were pelted at our buses and passengers.

In spite of the difficulties mentioned above, none of the bus owners nor the public come forward to represent their difficulties to the Government. The Government too has not bestowed any attention on this important branch of transport, as it does not fall under anyone of the Departments, such as Revenue, Criminal or Industrial. Now the Government has realised the importance of the Industry and has commenced taking necessary steps towards improvement. The reason is this. Although it has not reached such a state as in other countries and though it is in its initial stage, the bus service in India has increased in number and has begun to

affect the Railway. Further, national wealth is turned into petrol smoke and dust on account of wear and tear of tyres. The precious time of the executive officer is also wasted in cases arising out of the bus services. The present day officers have become experienced in this branch of public service.

In other countries, especially in England, a constable means a public servant, but here in India I fear many of our Indian Officers attend to their personal advantages rather than serve the public. Similarly, bus owners also without trying to manage their services efficiently giving maximum convenience to the public, go astray adopting indecent methods. Some people serving under Government had launched several false cases, when there had been no offence, simply to show their superiors that they had been strict in duty. Had they utilised this time rightly, they would have been able to minimise the number of undetectable cases.

Not only with regard to the motor business, but also in criminal cases and during intense political agitation, I have, directly and indirectly, been helping the Government to the best of my ability, and responsible officers have expressed their appreciation of my help.

Now I shall briefly narrate how the bus service of Coimbatore began to improve. Before the formation of Mitchel Committee, the then District Magistrate, Mr E. F. Thomas I. C. S., limited the number of buses in Coimbatore – Mettupalayam road and this was the very foundation for the

present day system of bus service in Coimbatore District. Had it not been for this, this District would not have come forward so much in matters of bus service and would have been on the same level with some of the other Districts. Thereafter, I used to approach the District Magistrates, who were in charge of this District from time to time explaining grievances, defects etc., and rectified them bit by bit.

Michievous booking clerks and drivers induced several bus owners, who were ignorant of motor business, to take this line of business and made them run 20 to 30 buses on a road, where 10 buses would have been sufficient. Thus, it will be seen there was wastage of money, of courts' time and wearing of roads, wear and tear of tyres and parts and burning petrol into smoke, making a total waste of about 10 lakhs of rupees in 1929-30, in one single year alone in the Coimbatore District. This condition has also been changed on account of above limitation. Representations were often made to the District Magistrates, to limit the number of buses for other roads and to fix timings for the several services for the sake of efficiency, and those suggestions were accepted and introduced. But unfortunately the District Magistrates of some neighbouring Districts refused to adopt this procedure.

Hence the matter was taken to the Revenue Board Member, who refused to interfere on the ground that it did not form part of his business. I again requested the Revenue Board Member to

interfere in the matter as the 'G' permit collections formed part of the revenue and as there was a good deal of waste of time for the officers of the department on account of irregular services and consequent increase of cases and as the subject was for the benefit of the public. Accordingly my suggestions were favourably forwarded to the Government and the Government was pleased to frame suitable rules. The Trichinopoly District also stands more or less on a par with this district though it has not got many organised services.

Before fixing time tables in Coimbatore District, public meetings of Divisional Officers, District Superintendents of Police, Deputy Superintendents of Police, Circle Inspectors, Sub-Inspectors, Revenue Officers and Tahsildars and bus owners were held in each division. All applications from bus owners were discussed taking into consideration the ability, finance, traffic requirements, and the passengers' convenience, and then only the timings were fixed. Hence the fixed time tables are adhered to in Coimbatore more than in any other district. Subsequently, additional timings were granted, wherever traffic conditions necessitated it, to the same bus owners, who were already on the line, to avoid unhealthy competition. But the present day, and the very recent practice has become just the reverse. According to the present practice, the District Magistrate, District Board President and District Superintendent of Police limit the number of buses for each road without consulting the bus owners in their conference. Through misrepresentation, influence or recommendation,

licences are granted in some districts to anybody who applies for it resulting in utter dislocation of service with loss and inconvenience to the public. This system is detrimental to efficient service. District Board Presidents are grumbling that granting of monopoly is contrary to rules. The important points to be considered in granting monopoly are public safety and economy. If there is unhealthy competition where there is no monopoly, it goes without saying that public safety is at stake. If there be satisfactory economy and public safety, then the question 'why not monopoly be granted' arises. The rule does or does not say that monopoly may or may not be granted. In Mitchel's Committee report, it is clearly said that monopoly is in existence in the United Provinces (para 31) and the Punjab (paras 39 and 41) and now Bombay Presidency has also recently started the system. A Bombay Government resolution announces that the Government have decided to accept the principle of granting monopolies to ply motor vehicles for hire in two classes of cases, (1) where it is desirable to encourage the development of road services and (2) to avoid danger on the Ghat roads. The District Magistrates are empowered to decide the question and act accordingly. No doubt, there may be companies which cannot be said to be completely economical. Some such companies were under my management also. Before Union, an average loss of 20% to 40% on the capital was found, but after Union was formed as limited companies even running of the rate of 8 to 12 annas for 40 to 65 miles, we were able to declare a dividend of 20 to 30%. Although I had been suggesting the union system for the

last five years, none of the bus owners cared to follow it, but when I explained by facts and figures by holding meetings of bus owners and convinced them, unions were then formed to the advantage of all and they are now declaring dividends as above.

I have the honour to be in charge of the management of about 10 bus transport limited companies with more than 60 owners merged therein.

It is a matter for regret that, even in this District, after seeing the advantages of combining into an union, some owners are still keeping aloof from forming themselves into limited concerns. I hope the advantages that are derived from limited companies will attract them soon.

Lately, I have found it difficult to continue as Managing Director of these concerns and have desired to resign from some companies, but I am asked to continue for some time more till they are firmly established, and I am again re-elected by co-directors. Motor transport limited companies have their own defects. To give an example, an owner had a debt of Rs. 3,000 by running a bus service. Then due to my pressure he joined a limited company. In the course of a year, he had drawn this amount from the company and cleared the debts and he is free now. Not content with all this, he never ceased to be a vexatious and troublesome member of this concern. On account of his conduct, I once even thought of dissolving this Company. At present no single bus owner exists separately in Coimbatore town except in limited companies.

Simultaneously, whenever I found difficulties in Motor Vehicles Rules, I used to approach the District Superintendent from time to time; and through his recommendation upon the points submitted, necessary rules had been framed by the Government. Even after such amendments, certain difficulties cropped up. For instance:

(a) When driving licences were forwarded for renewal, the drivers were not permitted to go on the line.

(b) New conductors had to wait till their certificates were received; etc. etc.

The then District Superintendents of Police Messrs. D. C. T. Cameron, H. Dawson, J. Elliot and F. Sayers were kind enough to realise the difficulties and to remove them. But regret to remark some other District Superintendents of Police did not do anything.

In Madura District, during the time of Mr J. F. Hall C.I.E., O.B.E., I.C.S., District Magistrate, the motor traffic control was well in force. Whenever there was a motor case, the 'G' Permit was cancelled and it was not renewed till the case was completely over in the court and the authorities were satisfied that the 'G' Permits and other licences could be granted again. This really went far in keeping down the number of motor accidents and motor charges.

(c) The Police officers once were of a different opinion about the procedure to be adopted at the time of change of engines and chassis. I

represented the difficulty to the then District Superintendent of Police, Mr A. F. Bulky; he took immediate steps and the Government were pleased to frame rules applicable to all the districts of the Presidency.

Again, when certain difficulties were represented to the Madura District Superintendent of Police Mr H. Keene, those matters were immediately attended to and the difficulties removed.

Several of the irregularities and mistakes in bus service have, on many occasions, been observed by several officers in disguise, chief among them being Mr (now Sir) C. B. Cunningham and Mr J. M. Green.

I quote some instances as examples:—

(a) I understand that, once, Mr Green, in disguise, travelled in a pleasure car, went to a police station and, noting the misbehaviour of his subordinates, with regard to motor service, took the subordinates, some drivers and certain bus owners severely to task.

(b) Before becoming the Inspector General of Police, Sir Cunningham, once, I understand, travelled in a rickshaw without the knowledge of his subordinates, mingled with them and found out all their misbehaviour. Once he travelled without being recognized and found out all the faults committed in buses and severely punished all the delinquents.

Even now, some of the Assistant Commissioners and District Superintendents of Police are taking rigid steps, looking into service, and bus conditions. Yet I am not prepared to say that these punishments are adequate enough considering the nature of the behaviour of bus owners, drivers and conductors. In spite of all this, the members of the subordinate staff are not careful enough to shake off their teasing tendency towards the bus owners and their staff. At the same time, I do admit that bus owners and members of the bus staffs play much mischief. I regret to say that justice is not meted out in all such cases. The bus owners somehow escape punishment. The practice of punishing for minor faults has not yet disappeared. I am not prepared to say that such things are not prevalant in my service. When such offences occur in my service, I myself take the matter to the notice of the authorities and, in true cases, I have rendered all possible help to the prosecution, and have even requested for deterrant punishment. For instance:—

(a) In a particular case I requested the court to award maximum fine with imprisonment, but the court awarded only a maximum fine of Rs. 200, since the offence was of a trivial nature.

(b) In certain other cases when I requested for conviction entailing imprisonment, the court was of opinion that imprisonment could not be passed for those offences.

(c) In a few other cases of rash driving and misbehaviour, I recommended to the District Superintendent of Police, the cancellation of driving

licences, but the District Superintendent of Police ordered that the cancellation could not be effected without regular cases.

In the Motor Vehicles Rules Revision Committee also I suggested severe punishments for motor offences, but the other members did not approve.

Similarly, irregularities regarding service were personally represented from time to time to Messrs. C. B. Cunningham (now Sir C. B. Cunningham), J. M. Green, E. L. Skinner, D. C. T. Cameron, J. Elliott and W. H. Wright. They were pleased to investigate and personally observe such things and put a stop to them. When Mr A. H. A. Todd I. C. S., was posted as the District Magistrate of Coimbatore, the fame that he had earned, as a friend of the public, made me think, that many grievances of the motor bus owners could be redressed during his regime. During the short time he was in charge of this District, I had occasion to represent to him many grievances against the public bodies interfering unnecessarily in bus transport. His sympathy for the people was so great that I made bold to approach him in the midst of his busy life inviting him to divine good-drinking-water-source for this junction, and my hopes in him are more than justified. Further, difficulties in bus service and inconvenience to the public, arising out of the rules, were pointed out to the present Inspector General of Police, who was pleased to remove them by getting adequate rules framed by the Government. Although most of the difficulties have been removed by the organisation of the Committee, yet there remain some

more for rectification. The Government, I hope, are prepared to remove them when taken to their notice.

The Government derives a very large amount by way of taxes on petrol, machineries, motors and spare parts, and the bus owner, as a contributor of such a large share of this income, has not been cared for, till very recently, by the Government, not to speak of the district boards and municipalities, which are benefitted by the Motor Vehicles Tax.

Instead of helping the bus owners, the local boards and municipalities have crushed them under heavy taxation. In many cases, local boards misuse the powers conferred on them by the motor rules and by-laws. They use their powers to levy the maximum tax, the law allows them. I was myself a Municipal Councillor some 10 years back, and it is my sad experience to note that the local bodies give the maximum trouble possible. From that time onwards I have lost all faith in the Local Boards, Municipalities, the so called public institutions, or the Congress. In all the above public institutions the majority of our friends take low advantage of the illiteracy of the people and work to their private gain. I have attended the annual sessions of the Indian National Congress regularly from 1915 to 1921 and, comparing those days with our present conditions, whilst in those days, there were more than 75% of honest members, now 9,990 out of 10,000 connot claim that honour. Of course, I do not include Mahatma Gandhi or Dr Tagore or such honest leaders in this list. Some members of

that body have taken to political trade just to make their livelihood. Of late, the Congress has also begun to invade the local bodies, which were even previously in a bad state. During the last elections, a gentleman stood on Congress ticket for a councillorship in one of the municipalities and he withdrew silently after receiving a small sum of money.

Those, who have entered the local bodies on Congress tickets, unfortunately, have no fixed programme, and I am led to believe that many of them are there only to gain their own object.

I shall now proceed to give an instance of how local boards are using their powers. Recently, the Government passed a G. O., by which, on paying the maximum tax fixed for a bus, for one District Board, it could run in another district also, after paying one third less of the maximum amount for that district. The district boards can fix any amount, according to their discretion not exceeding the maximum. Though this privilege was allowed by the Government, the district boards took care to collect the maximum tax. Municipalities also were, in like manner, allowed to grant concession in licence fees. Excepting a few municipalities all the others are collecting the maximum. I petitioned to the Chief Minister on this point, but the reply, I received, was that the municipalities, themselves, had powers to reduce the fees. Again I appealed to the municipalities. They refused to consider my application. There is a hue and cry for the improvement of public transport services in this

country, but it is hardly possible for the poor bus owners, crushed under the weight of heavy taxation, to do anything by way of improvement. The local bodies, who are manned by our own people are worse than the Government, and they, like Shylock, fleece, to the very last drop of blood, the poor bus owner.

In this connection, I cannot but congratulate the Hon'ble Raja Saheb of Bobbili K. C. I. E., the chief minister to the Government of Madras, for the bold and daring policy, he has inaugurated in abolishing taluk boards and in appointing Commissioners for municipalities. In the case of abolition of Taluk Boards, I believe he has done good to our country. Though the taluk boards might have done a little good, they have, to a large extent, been the cause of faction in villages and towns and election competitions, involving enormous waste of money from Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 10,000 in each election. In some cases murder and robbery have also resulted. Families are divided by the elections, life-long ill-feeling and bad blood created. This abolition of taluk boards has certainly put an end to all these things. The appointment of Commissioners has taken away the keenness in Municipal elections, though in some places bitterness continues. I think they will soon pass off. In my opinion, the greatest service that the Chief Minister has done to our country consists in the above two acts, namely, the abolition of taluk boards and the appointment of Commissioners for municipalities.

This bus service has no connections with the Government or political movements. I hope you will excuse me for the digression I have made taking up your valuable time.

The system of giving bonus has been introduced for some years past and an amount of 20 to 30 thousand rupees is spent annually towards bonus. These amounts were distributed privately, as when once it was given publicly, a section of the drivers threatened strike on the ground that all the drivers were not given equal amounts of bonus. In 1933 the bonus was declared publicly, and medals and certificates were distributed to efficient workers. This year and in coming years also, I intend to distribute 30 to 40 thousand rupees in the shape of extra batta, increments, allowances and bonus. In addition, this year, the following persons have been declared prize winners for reasons mentioned against each individual, including ex-staff, who are helping for the improvement of the service, although they are at present working elsewhere.

The Managing Agent wishes to record his appreciation of the excellent services of the following ex-employees, rendered during the time they worked under him for the firm, in the capacities mentioned below, and, in token thereof, is awarding them special purses.

1. Mr S. Santhappa Pillai, Retired Circle Inspector.	As General Manager of the firm who taught the lesson of honesty to the staff.	Gold Medal

2. Mr Appavu Pillai of S. A. Pillai Motor works.	As Foreman of Mctor workshop	Rs. 100
3. „ Kuppanasari	As a Mechanical Fitter	„ 100
4. „ K. Ramaswami Naidu	As an efficient and honest motor bus driver	„ 100
5. „ Lakshmana Mudaliar	As an efficient and honest motor bus driver	„ 100
6. „ Thirumalai Gounder	As an honest booking clerk	„ 50
7. „ Kutti Asari	As a foreman of smithy work department	„ 50
8. „ Subramania Iyer	As Electrical Engineer	„ 50
9. „ R. V. Iyer	As Workshop Manager	„ 75
10. „ Rajaman Singh	As a Booking Clerk, for long Service	„ 75
11. „ Mohamed Hussain Sahib	As an able, and honest Checking Inspector	„ 75
12. „ K. Mohamed Nizamuddin Sahib	As an able Checking Inspector	„ 50

The Managing Agent is also awarding prizes for the good work done by the following employees who are in service.

1.	Mr Palaniappa Chettiar	As an honest and able Checking Inspector	Rs. 100
2.	„ Rangaswamy Chettiar	As an honest Checking Inspector	„ 25
3.	„ Appasami Naidu	As an honest Checking Inspector	„ 50
4.	„ David Pillai	As an honest Checking Inspector	„ 100
5.	„ Kuppuswami Iyer	Booking Clerk	„ 100
6.	„ Marimuthu Chettiar	Driver - The Company wishes to make special mention of his bravery in rescuing, at the risk of his life, two persons from drowning in the well on the Palani Hills.	„ 100

7. Mr Muniswami	Driver – special mention is made of timely help rendered by him to Mr Smith, Superintendent of Post Offices, when the latter met with an accident some years back.	Rs. 75
8. „ K. C. Gopalan Nair	Driver – Special mention is made of the help rendered by him to Mr Seymor of Richmond Park Tea Estate during a severe accident on the road.	

He is also sanctioning Rs. 19,000 for distribution among other efficient members of the staff as follows:—

	Rs.
For Tiruppur Branch, through Director-in-charge ...	6,000
For Dharapuram Branch, through Director-in-charge ...	4,000
For Pollachi Branch, through Director of Transports ...	3,000
For Coimbatore Branch, through Director of Transports ...	6,000
	Rs. 19,000

In the near future, i e., in the beginning of 1936, we are intending to give 25% of the net profit to all staffs who render efficient service. Therefore, the whole staff will co-operate and will do their best for the improvement of the service providing maximum comfort to the public.

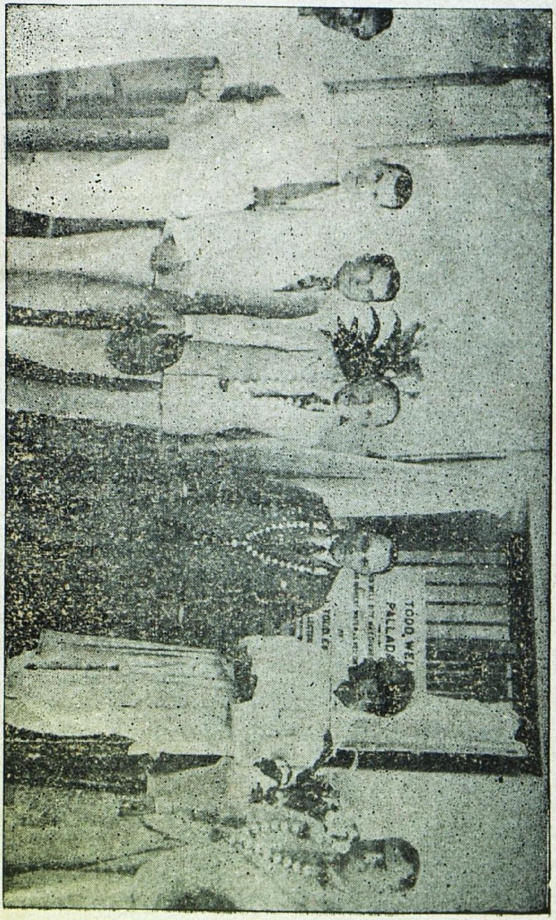
Before requesting you, Sir, to declare this new Bus Junction open, I shall give a brief description of this building.

This new Junction building is situated at Palladam on the Coimbatore - Trichinopoly road, 23 miles from Coimbatore. The building consists of garages, offices, restaurants, workshop and waiting rooms, complete with modern sanitary equipments. It has a floor area of more than 22,000 sq. ft., built at a cost of Rs. 45,000, with a workshop installed with modern machineries, at a cost of Rs. 20,000, for small way-side repairs of buses. Major repairs, body building and over-hauling are done at Coimbatore Head Office workshop. The workshop is situated behind this building and there is an engine room for pumping water for cleaning buses. The whole premises cover an area of about 2 acres. The South Indian Railway Co., Ltd., have an out-agency office within these premises and tickets are available for stations over their Railway. This bus junction is the biggest in India where daily there are more than 70 arrivals and departures of buses with more than 1,500 passengers on an average. Here, the arrivals and departures of buses are controlled by automatic time recorders. Printed time tables are issued for public information.

Secondly comes the function of opening the "Todd Well." The water available here is brackish and unfit for drinking purposes and as saltish as sea water. When a piece of iron rod ½" thick, that had fallen into the well, was taken out recently, it was found, owing to the property of the water, to be easily breakable by a boy. It will be very hard if no good drinking water is available at such an important place where more than 1,500 people pass daily. 'Diviner' as I should call, Mr A. H. A. Todd I. C. S., divined the present plot for sinking a well and I took up his advice and dug the well. While the surrounding wells, within but a few yards range, have very bad saline water fortunately for this spot the divination came true and excellent drinking water is available here. The water from the well is being led to the building by means of a suction pump. Though, at first, experts, scientists, agriculturists and engineers thought it impracticable to work a 1500 ft. suction, here it can be seen working successfully.

Considering the gift and the divination, the well has been named the "Todd Well".

Now, Sir, I request that you may be kindly pleased to declare this United Motors Bus Junction open.



SPEECH DELIVERED BY

Mr G. T. BOAG C. I. E., I. C. S.,

on the occasion of the Opening Function of U. M. S. Junction Buildings at Palladam on 30th June 1935.

I thank Mr Naidu for inviting me here this evening and giving me an opportunity to observe the high efficiency with which public transport in the Coimbatore District is organised. I made Mr Naidu's acquaintance recently at the meeting of the Motor Vehicles Rules Revision Committee over which I presided. Though we could not accept all his suggestions and recommendations, his experience of the actual working of motor transport was of great help to us. I am glad to have the opportunity of testifying to the value of his services as a member of that Committee, as also to express my admiration of the manner in which he has built up his business here. The efficient way in which this service is managed is an example to be copied by bus owners in other districts. In his address Mr Naidu has mentioned that by co-operation with Government officers, the public and the staff, he has been able to improve the efficiency of his service. This is an instance how by mutual help and co-operation, transport services can be successfully run.

I belive there is no other bus junction which offers such facilities or conveniences in the presidency, not even in the Metropolis of Madras. Other bus owners may with advantage follow the example set by Mr Naidu.

I congratulate Mr Naidu for his achievement in motor transport business and wish him all success in his endeavours.

Sir Charles B. Cunningham, Inspector General of Police, Madras.

I join with Mr Boag in his deserved congratulations.

(Sd) C. B. CUNNINGHAM.

30-6-1935.

Mr W. H. Wright, District Superintendent of Police, Coimbatore.

I join in my congratulations.

(Sd) W. H. WRIGHT.

30-6-1935.

The Hon. Mr V. C. Vellingiri Gounder, Member, Council of State, and President, District Board, Coimbatore.

I enjoyed the splendid arrangement in new motor garage and give my congratulations on the grand arrangement.

(Sd) V. C. VELLINGIRI GOUNDER.

30-6-1935.

The Visit of His Excellency

SIR ARTHUR HOPE G. C. I. E., M. C.,

GOVERNOR OF MADRAS

TO

The U. M. S. Central Station

ON

22-9-1942

Welcome Address delivered by

Mr G. D. NAIDU

on the occassion, when the U. M. S. Central Station, Coimbatore, was declared open by

HIS EXCELLENCY

SIR ARTHUR HOPE G. C. I. E., M. C.,

GOVERNOR OF MADRAS,

on Tuesday, 22—9—1942, at 12-30 p. m., before a distinguished gathering.

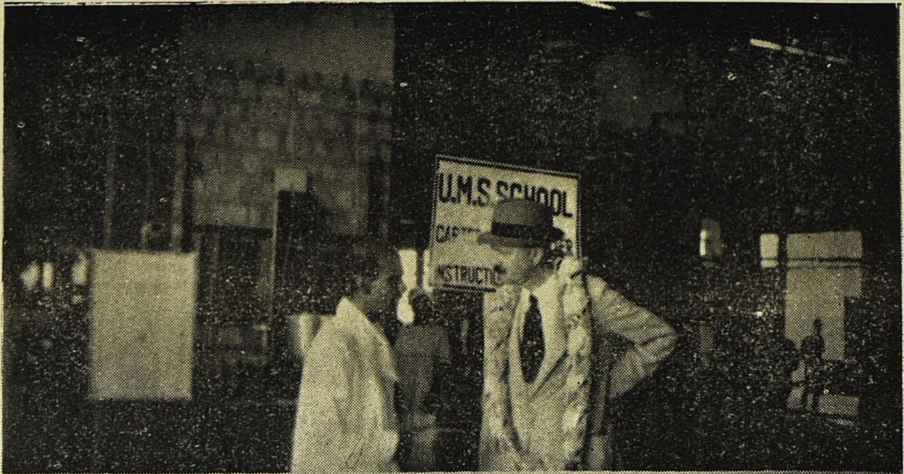
May it please Your Excellency,

I have great pleasure in welcoming YOUR EXCELLENCY in our midst to perform the opening ceremony of the U. M. S. Central Station, which has been constructed and modelled on upto-date lines. My gratitude is all the deeper and more genuine in view of the fact, that Your Excellency has, despite the increased responsibilities resulting from the ill-chosen, I might say suicidal, Civil Disobedience movement, found time to accede to my request, which I realise is something of an exception, and which kindness will ever be remembered by me.

With regard to the new Station, the following facts may be of interest. The question may arise as to why this Bus Station has been constructed at such an enormous cost, which may be valued at present, including original office building and land,

at nearly 4 lakhs of rupees. One reason for this is to prevent wastage. For example, according to an estimate made in 1932, the average annual wastage on tyres, parts, and fuel alone in the Coimbatore District amounted to 7 Lakhs of rupees. Now, owing to the exigencies of the war and the increased shortage of tyres and fuel, it has become all the more necessary not only to prevent such wastage, but to find ways of economising to the greatest possible extent. Any failure to do this, even after seeing how increasingly valuable, tyres and fuel are for the winning of this war, would amount to criminality. It would be amongst ordinary people, who do not know how to prevent this wastage. But in my case, having known how this can be prevented, if I neglect to use that knowledge, either intentionally or unintentionally, it would be the worst form of criminality possible. That is one of the main reasons for the construction of this Station, namely, to economise in such a way as to get the tyres and fuel to yield the maximum benefit at minimum cost.

Owing to the demands of the war, a heavy burden has necessarily been thrown on road transport facilities. For example, 32 of our new buses have been acquired by the Government for war purposes. Furthermore, new buses are not available; neither are spare parts. And even if the material necessary for these parts is available, the cost is, in some cases, as much as ten times the pre-war rates. In addition to these, there is the serious shortage of petrol and tyres and the rationing of the same. All these and many other restrictions on road transport facilities have made it absolutely



G. D. Naidu, Managing Agent, United Motors (Coimbatore) Ltd., and Importers Limited, Coimbatore, received His Excellency The Governor of Madras who visited the U.M.S.School in the Carter Carburetor Instruction Section on 19-12-1941.

necessary for me not only to run the service with old buses, but to find ways and means of doing this economically in a centralised way. That will explain to a large extent why, everyone, including the Government, is economising, and when the prices of steel, zinc sheets, electric goods, cement etc., have risen by many times, I have considered it essential for the more economic and efficient running of the service to have launched this construction. Whatever may be the appearance on the surface, in reality it is the strictest form of economy.

Turning now to this construction, it contains, as separate units, a bus stand with 33 sections; administration buildings with 42 sections on the ground floor and 20 sections upstairs; maintenance works with 20 sections; a service station with 12 sections; and the greasing and fuelling departments with 8 sections, making altogether 135 sections over a total constructed area of 1,18,000 sq. feet, in which the covered area is 60,000 sq. feet. These sections, whether small or big, lined or partitioned, serve separate purposes and are connected in one way or other with bus transport. And partly as a result of my travels abroad, especially in England and America, I have been able to secure and incorporate the most up-to-date apparatus and methods of dealing with Transport. There is even a show room here, in which is kept all the latest mechanical and scientific motor necessities. A radio manufactured by us in our Radio Factory is also installed on the premises and this gives true news about the war – a corrective to fifth columnist activities.

As for the history and progress of the U. M. S., I may say, that it began in 1921 with one bus, driven by myself. It now has eight transport companies incorporated in it, operating over the Districts of Coimbatore, Malabar, Madura and Cochin State. In this way, no fewer than 60 important places are served. Before the war, we had 205 buses, but this number has now been reduced to less than half of that, owing to the reasons already mentioned.

The U. M. S. has also a National Electric Works and Radio Factory — The first of their kind in India — in which are manufactured from materials produced in the country, Electric Motors and Radios, with the exception of valves and speakers. Here, too, are being trained, war technicians in Automobile, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering. To house these workers, we have also built a Hostel, which was kindly declared open by Your Excellency last December.

Incidentally, I would like to mention, that during the recent C. D. disturbances in this district, our buses not only kept up a steady service and supplied a real need, but our drivers and conductors showed a very commendable courage and devotion to duty. And this occasion is being taken to present such workers with certificates of merit. Further, I am glad to say, that this year a bonus of Rs. 1½ lakhs has been given to our employees.

In conclusion, I may say, that it has been my desire, that this station should prove an example in every way to others, and I am confident, that on account of this construction and equipment the

u. m. s. Service station - with modern
+ latest testing machine Selected in different
countries.
u. m. s.
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service will improve from today on. I claim no perfection in these matters. Indeed, I am but a humble student of Industrial Progress. But I do think, that what can be done in other countries can be done in our own, provided we make up our minds for this and give to it the necessary time and energy and money. That is all I am trying to do. It is a work, which I am certain, must grow, for India has vast resources, and in the New World, that must follow the certain defeat of the enemy, India can and will take an increasingly important part in the construction of that New World Order.

Once more, I thank Your Excellency for so generously responding to my inivitation, and I would now ask Your Excellency to kindly declare this station open, which, by the way, I may say, is the largest Bus Station in India.

In declaring open the U. M. S. Central Station, HIS EXCELLENCY Spoke as follows:

Mr Naidu, Ladies & Gentlemen,

My visit to Coimbatore seems to increase in numbers as the years go by. I might say, that Coimbatore has become almost a third capital of the Madras Presidency. I am very delighted to be here today and tomorrow, and I am particularly pleased to open this very fine Bus Station. As Mr G. D. NAIDU has said in the course of his remarks, it seems in many ways an inappropriate

time to launch on a big station like this. It is very necessary to get proper organisation in transport service and we all know what Mr G. D. Naidu has done for transport in this and the neighbouring districts. At the present time great economy is essential in almost everything, whether it be in the transport world or whether it be in the food world or in any other form of activity. Economy is most essential and I am perfectly certain that this new station will help to economise transport of the U. M. S.

Mr G. D. Naidu has sketched the work of the U. M. S. in the last 20 years and more and everyone of us knows very well what great work Mr G. D. Naidu and his company have done. They have risen from small beginnings to a really large concern I have had great pleasure in seeing his National Electric Works and I know very well what Mr G. D. Naidu has done for his employees and for the people of Coimbatore in general. It is, therefore with great pleasure that I came here this morning to open this new and large Bus Station. I do not want to touch on any general topic, but I do not want to say how cordially I agree with what Mr G. D. Naidu has said about the loyalty of his employees during the recent Civil Disobedience movement here. I know very well, that it takes a good deal of courage to drive a bus; it may be with a hostile crowd round about us and I do most warmly congratulate the employees of the U. M. S. and have great pleasure later on in giving them the certificates, which Mr G. D. Naidu has awarded to them.

Mr G. D. Naidu finished up his speech by saying that India has vast resources, which could be made use of more and more as time goes on. I agree with him entirely. I agree with him that India has a very great industrial future. Her resources have not been made use of as much as they should have been in the past, but this war is proving what India can do in the way of industrial activity and I know very well whatever the political future of India may be that industry is going to be revolutionised in this country and it will become one of the greatest industrial countries in the world. Great credit is due to the pioneers in any movement to industrialise a country. In Great Britain 150 years ago people were just then beginning to enter into an industrial age. India is entering into that age now and its pioneers like Mr G. D. Naidu should have and will get credit for making India a happier and more prosperous country. I congratulate Mr G. D. Naidu on his enterprise and especially on this latest one. I am delighted to be here to congratulate him and open this Station. I want also to thank him for his philanthropy and generosity in the past both for the war effort and private endowments and I now formally declare this station open, which, I hope, will add to the comfort of a very large number of people in this district.

I want to thank Mr G. D. Naidu for his offer of the net profits accruing from this Station to the war fund for the duration of the war. It is a fine example indeed, which, I hope, everybody would emulate. As you know, the Old Madras Regiment, which is being reconstituted is going to have its

headquarters here in Coimbatore. That is going to be as permanent as any thing in the world can be permanent. These troops are all Madrasis. They come from all parts of the Madras Presidency. It is, therefore, necessary, that their time should be made comfortable and it is proposed to have a large canteen for these troops with football, and hockey fields etc., so that they can have a full measure of enjoyment. I appeal to you all to do what you can in providing such amenities. Anyone who feels that he can contribute for the comfort of the troops can give anything to the Collector and I would say that money would be used for the troops who are here at the present time.

SIR R. K. SHANMUKHAM CHETTIAR K.C.I.E., in proposing a vote of thanks to HIS EXCELLENCY said :

It is now my pleasant duty on behalf of Mr G. D. NAIDU and the public of Coimbatore at large to thank His Excellency for the trouble, that he has taken in going over here this morning and declaring this magnificent Bus Station open. At such a period as this it would require some justification for anyone to disturb Your Excellency's time and make a request that Your Excellency should go over to a particular place for a particular function. I think it would be quite easy to justify the request that has been made to Your Excellency on this occasion.

Your Excellency referred to the importance of transport in a period of war. It has been recognised that in a vast country like India with over 400 millions of population spread over vast tracts, the problem of maintaining an efficient transport system is as important in winning the war as the problem of producing munitions. From practical experience during the last few months, we have begun to realise how important and how growingly important this problem of transport is bound to become in the future. We now feel acute shortage of foodstuffs and certain other essential commodities, but we know fully well that this scarcity is not due so much to the inherent physical difficulty of production as it is due to the problem of transport. We have over 50 000 miles of a splendid railway system, but that railway has borne the brunt of military as well as civilian needs. Anyone who tries to solve and make easy the problem of transport is doing something of which they might all be proud. Mr G. D. Naidu and others with him who are trying to build up an efficient road transport system are directly helping war effort and in that they are trying to ease this problem of transport.

The history of industrial development during the last three years for those, who know it intimately is really a history of which we can be proud. I think the public have not adequately realised what tremendous industrial output has been made in this country ever since the war began. There are those who think that it is not possible for us to meet the day to day demands of our industries because of the difficulty of getting the necessary machinery. Well

sir, to them I would point out the inspiring example of China. China has given us an example not merely in the glorious fight that she is putting up for five long years against brutal agression, but she has been building up great industries for supplying her war needs. If a country so industrially backward as China with her resources can build up a magnificent organisation, it is certainly possible for a country like India with infinitely vaster resources and infinitely greater experience to contribute something substantial to the promotion of the war effort of the United Nations. I hope Mr. G. D. Naidu's example will be copied by others and everyone should feel, however humble one's work may appear on the surface, that it would go a long way to help the war effort of the United Nations. We, in South India and especially in Coimbatore, feel legitimately proud that we have done something of which we can be proud. I hope, that the public of Coimbatore will not simply rest content with its laurels, but will put forward its best efforts to promote war efforts. I know that we are passing through anxious and critical times. I know there are those, who think of the great political future that awaits India, but to them I can say with confidence, that we are to fight for freedom and if we are to prove worthy of freedom, we must, in the first instance, show that we can fight and shed our blood for preserving it.

ADDRESS

by

MR G. D. NAIDU

on

"NATIONALISATION OF TRANSPORT"

on the occasion of the

Coimbatore Rotary Club Meeting

at

'Gopal Bagh" Avanashi Road,
COIMBATORE

on

21—11—1946.

MR G. D. NAIDU

on

"NATIONALISATION OF TRANSPORT"

Dear Rotarian President and Brother-Rotarians,

As usual, before coming to the subject, I have to thank the President and members of this club for having given me this opportunity today for speaking on "Nationalisation of Transport".

Nationalisation is a very big problem with great risks and responsibilities and it requires courage to face any risk and danger. Instead of expressing my views in the end, I would like to say here, now in the beginning itself, as the essence or answer to the question on the subject of Nationalisation, that our Government itself is not yet nationalised, though we have our Indian members as heads of the Government. Our present Government is still the old Government. Its ways and means, lessons and teachings, manners and behaviours, quality and quantity, production and consumption, dependence and independence are mostly the same as was in the old Government and in some respects worse. Strikes of the type so far unheard of and unusual ways of leading the innocent mobs to fight each other in the name of religion or for the purpose of robbery and political causes are taking place. In addition

to these, deaths were caused by created famines and other reasons. This is not quite unnatural in any country at such a transition period. I should say, that comparing the sufferings, which other countries were subjected to, during their period of such transition, our present sufferings are far less. I do not know whom we should thank for this. At the same time I have my own doubts, whether for all these troubles our country would get independence, or the constitution of the constituent assembly is only an eye-wash. This, of course, depends much upon the attitude of Russia, for another war is predicted by several war experts, in 1948. Probably we may get independence from Britain by fluke or chance, but this depends mostly on the situation in Europe.

In the meanwhile I have my own doubts, whether we are going to prove ourselves to be fit to have that meagre chance of the promised independence. No doubt, several leaders are very eager and are spending their whole life and energy for this purpose, facing many troubles. But when we see the present conditions, the results seem to be gloomy. Taking that we have independence now itself, we have to consider what to do next. The next thing to do is not to nationalise everything as proposed by the present Madras Government. No doubt, nationalisation or rather Socialism is the best among the many other systems, but before we bring in that Socialism, we must have some power. This power is not the military power. Military power is required to conquer a country. But to win the confidence of the public and their full co-operation in all

directions, we require some other power. That power is lacking in our country, while other western and eastern countries have that power enormously as a foundation. We have not built this foundation and so we have no such power. Without this power we cannot dream of the fruit of nationalisation to reach our mouth, because we will not be able to bear the burden even when the British Government thrusts independence upon our head. If we have no such power, we will have to ask for help from some others to bear this burden.

Now what is this power and how to get it? This power is, training the whole mass in co-operation and honesty and also training to take up some responsible work in the task of nationalisation. We must make each one feel, that he is responsible for conducting a certain work properly and efficiently for the good of the society and himself. It is very easy to say this. We can see in papers, in articles and in books and everyday lectures that this is the advice of everyone and what is desired by all. These are the foundations on which the National Government should stand as a State, as a body and as a public and powerful nation. Now, what is lacking here to attain this power? As I have already said in the beginning, excepting a few, the whole of the Government Machinery is still in its old groove. The administrative ways, acts and rules are the same. The present Government and the public are very eager to stop corruption and anti-corruption departments have also been set up. But unfortunately, the Government has not devised still more suitable methods.

If a control department is established, then the next moment the blackmarket section also starts either by reason directly of this department or by the blackmarketeers, who are living in the midst of the innocent public. If one act is published in the gazette, then hundreds of ways and means to act against it are devised by interested people and brought into action before the act comes into force. When any officer is appointed, he too is compelled to follow the old path because of temptations in his way. Very rarely do we find conscientious persons not following in the old groove.

In my opinion, if we take the statistics of corruption after the outbreak of the second war, it will be observed, that it has increased by more than 3 times and now after the war, it has again increased by many times in spite of the fact that the Government is trying to reduce such corruption. In some respects the scheme of certain controls themselves is to be blamed. Though I hesitate to mention the reason, yet I am compelled to say here that the punishments imposed for corruption are too lenient. It is a well-known fact, that even now corrupt people in Government or amongst the public are getting very good returns and prizes are given by their superiors instead of severe punishments. This is how rules and acts are practised from the time of the East India Company upto now. This system, though introduced in good faith, has grown and reached a bad state now. The national leaders have entered into the administrative machinery only now and there is no

time to set right this foremost and strongest evil and the opposite pole to any nationalism in the world. Until such things are put down they cannot be said to form National Government.

In general before thinking of nationalising anything, the Government should first put down corruption. To put down corruption, the whole administrative machinery should be overhauled and corrupt people also should be handled with an iron hand. After winning the co-operation of all citizens and training them in honesty and making them realise the sense of responsibility, we can say, that nationalisation will be successfully achieved. But until everyone is so trained, we will require Fascism, Nazism or Stalinism at least for some time to put down corruption entirely either in the Government machinery or among the public. Let the country be ruled by any party leaders either by Nehru or Patel; Jinnah or Liaqat Ali Khan; Mukerjee or Ambedkar; our Rajagopalachari or Ramasami Periar, but they must take such drastic steps as taken by Hitler or Stalin in order to have corruption completely wiped out from the public as well as Government machinery. By this I do not mean to say that they should follow a path of war. They should train the innocent masses in honesty and gain their co-operation for industrialisation. I would like to cite one or two instances here.

Before 1932 in Germany, there was corruption in every office, and in every public place, robbery, theft and murders were taking place. But it was

quite a different thing in 1935. When I visited Germany in 1935, I found that one could put anything in any place and no one would steal; one could go to any office to get anything reasonable without spending a minute more than necessary or without spending a single cent more than its value, and I myself never locked any of my rooms or boxes at the big or small hotels or even in railway stations. In the same year when I visited Russia, there too I never heard of any corruption or any cases of duping or deceiving either amongst the public or in Government. Of course, politically I am not in favour of Stalinism, because it is not real Communism but it is Hitlerism in every walk of life. We can compare Hitlerism to Nationalism except for Hitler's ambitions for world supremacy. But what I say is that in Russia, there is terrorism under the cover of Communism. As far as wiping out corruption is concerned, we have to follow them.

In Germany the first order passed was that against stealing, may it be for 5 cents or for 1,000 marks; and for receiving or paying 5 cents or 1,000 marks as bribes, they should pay thousands of marks as fine and must undergo imprisonment for six months on several terms. In Russia punishment for stealing a grain from the collective farms is death sentence. Of course, when using such machinery, some part of the administrative machine turns immoral in its duty and causes sufferings to a few innocent people. But when such severe punishments are imposed by Government and brought into force, no one on earth will dare to go against the rules. Hence, the Government need have no fear in this

respect. Unless we do something on these lines, it will be impossible to have anything conducted by state. On the other hand it will lead to ruination in the name of nationalisation. Before laying such foundations and building forts for nationalisation, if Government takes any such steps, we are sure that we are going to be slaves to others for decades and decades.

As a first step, the Government must raise production and industry to a higher level in order to maintain everything in its level. When the needs of the public are met sufficiently, there is no chance for corruption and blackmarketing. Unfortunately the present Government is going in the opposite direction. One instance is the wiping away of textile industry and the introduction of Khadi. By textile industry we are getting at least a few yards for each, but if textile industry is wiped out as envisaged by Mr T. Prakasam, I am sure that by Khadi we will get only a few feet. When it comes to a few feet, is there any Government army to put down corruption and blackmarketing in eastern goods? An army can kill a number of people in a mob, but it cannot win the confidence of the public. In my opinion the Khadi industry will be a failure. Without fear or favour, the people, who are interested in Nationalism, should oppose the policy of the Madras Government with regard to textile industry. Khadi, it can be said, was introduced as a weapon to drive British out of India. But we fail to understand as to what explanation can be offered in raising Khadi industry and putting down other industries when the Britishers are about to quit India. I am sorry

that I have been led away from the subject. I have already taken much of your time for general introduction. But as these are the main points to be explained before we go into the subject, I hope that none of our brother-rotarians will mistake me.

Recently I read in the papers, that our Madras Government have decided to take over the transport business to be run by them. No doubt, transport business will bring very good dividend, wherever it is properly conducted. But whoever takes the responsibility of conducting transport business, should evince a keen interest in it, and should be very alert and have very good organising power and must possess a good knowledge in automobile engineering. We find, that, in other countries, where transport business has been nationalised, they are lacking in one or more of these qualities. In some places it is being conducted very efficiently. For instance, the London Transport Board is running more efficiently than any others. While several states in the United States are running transport service profitably, some of the state transports are meeting with heavy loss. Some years back Germany and Austria nationalised transport and incurred very heavy loss. But in Germany as this was considered as a section for preparing for war, it was not considered a loss.

America made an experiment in nationalising air transport soon after the first war. But it had to hand over to private concerns very shortly. The reason for this was the higher number of accidents and the Government machinery cannot

concentrate as private individuals do in such risky jobs. Our country is lacking in several matters. Hence we can daringly say, that the Government is not fit to take transport service in their hands and should not do so before the right foundation is laid. In the beginning, everything is risky and will lead to loss. I do not think it advisable to nationalise transport or any other industry immediately, before devising some methods gradually to run on profit and without inconvenience.

Our workers, particularly drivers and conductors and others of the staff, in transport system, though they hold licences and certificates, are not yet trained to discharge their duties properly and efficiently. Misappropriation of collections by conductors and misuse of buses by drivers when they are on duty and wasting petrol, tyres and other parts are everyday experiences in almost all bus services and on the administration side, troubles are created and tricks played by every member of the staff. I have published a Guide Book on this subject for the bus service under my control, which will show everything in detail. It is not possible to explain all these things in this short time. Unfortunately, I have got only one book for my record here, otherwise I would have supplied each member with a book.

When the transport system is taken over by the Government, immediately almost all the members of the staff become mechanical. I will just illustrate this point. A driver will run the bus and will not care to tighten a nut or fill oil or keep proper air

pressure in tyre. He will leave it to the Mechanic. In the same way, conductors may not stop, where passengers are available and may stop at a place, where he has some work and where there are no passengers. There will be no co-ordination of the services as such and the sub-departments also will work in opposite directions. Even now, when services are run by private persons, who are taking a keen interest, the conductors bribe the drivers and the drivers are bribed by other agents to say that their materials are good, even though they are otherwise. Because of the great care taken by owners, the amounts spent on repairs and replacing of parts are low to a certain extent. When the transport service is in the hands of the Government, a large scale misappropriation will prevail. Misappropriation of parts will be enormous and worn out parts will be in place of new parts, which will be removed by some one. If taken by State, the transport system will become the first place for internal corruption among the other industries. On a comparative study of industrial developments in foreign countries, you will find, that State control comes as a very last stage. Private enterprise means more centralization, more venture and greater out turn, which are not found in Government-run snail-slow schemes, where everything goes on paper, replies and counter replies.

Further, in other countries, vehicles and parts are manufactured by them then and there. When there is no such facility in India, this will lead to national wastage on a large scale. We have no trace of the bus services taken by the State of Travancore, but we hear, that in another state, service

taken by the Government is running on a very great loss: Apart from this, if we look back to the pre-war days, numerous owners have lost heavily Of course, a few, who are experts in organising, have made huge profits. Without a foundation of proper training to the staff and proper control over them if the Government takes the service, the Government will not only burn its hands, but the public too will be much inconvenienced and accident rates too will be very heavy I can cite numerous instances of mal-administration in the Government, while private individuals are running the bus service. This itself is an example to show that when the Government are not able to control the public service as at present, they are not fit by themselves to conduct it.

Before taking any industry, Government should first consider seriously the fundamental needs of such industries. Such needs should be taken first. For instance, instead of importing several vehicles worth crores of rupees, a factory should be started for this purpose for the whole of the Presidency. Of course, it may not be possible to manufacture every part, but the parts other than those parts that cannot but be imported from foreign countries, can be manufactured here. Then only the public will have confidence and will also take a keen interest in it and then it will be easier for the Government to take up the transport system in their own hands. In the same way a concern for manufacturing textile machinery is important. Instead of importing textile machinery for two or three crores, it will be more profitable, if we start a factory here by spending half of that money. Instead of importing

half crore to one crore worth of fountain pens by aeroplanes from dollar areas or from sterling areas, we must import capital machinery to manufacture the necessary equipment to save the wastage. So, whatever industries the Government intend to take, the mother industries and equipments of those industries should be started first, either by the Government or by private persons. Then the Government may take over such industries. Before starting the concerns for the maintenance of industries and before our men are trained properly, any scheme taken by the Government will ruin the development of industry and will bring heavy loss. Because of the short time given to me, I cannot explain now, with figures, which will take many hours.

Further, I am sending proposals to the Government devising ways and means to be adopted in the beginning. In one of the proposals I have asked the Government, on behalf of the Arthur Hope Polytechnic, to give permits to run service in this town. I have received numerous complaints from the public about the inconvenience felt in different places. Some time back, when I suggested a plan to run efficient service in this town, the Municipality refused to consider my plan. This plan was considered by other states and appreciated and they may have perhaps introduced it. The plans are not very difficult or elaborate to be put into action. They are very simple and very convenient to the public and at the same time very easy to control. Just before starting the service, some officers consulted me. The advice given by me was not heeded to. This usually happens with advice given in one's own

province or country. Local authorities do not attach much importance to it, whereas outside people follow it in good parts and profit thereby. In the same way advice from outside is valued more, though it may not be suitable for our purpose. You may ask me what the plans are or what the advices are. But, for this, I am sorry, that I have no time to explain. Further, I do not wish to say it here or in any other place or to advertise, but I want to put them into action and if I am given the chance, I will put my plans into action in the very near future. In this connection I have already discussed with one of the Ministers, who has agreed to my views and I hope very soon I will be able to put this in practice so that the Government or private owners may follow this later in their service.

By the Khadi scheme, can the Government assure that Khadi sarees can be made available for Rs. 4/- or 5/-, when mills are stopped or run by the Government? No one can dream the price of Khadi cloth to come lower than mill cloth, which means that middle class and other people will have to spend enormously for their clothing. If by any means the Government can guarantee that the price of cloth will be lower and will meet the demands of the public, no one will object to this scheme.

In the same way in bus transport also, if the Government can guarantee, that it will be possible for them to give the maximum convenience to passengers with the least number of accidents without increased rate, then none will object to the nationalisation of transport. It has been our experience

in the past that though very strict discipline is observed in Military and punishments are very severe, the accident rates were very heavy when military vehicles were in operation during war time. This is sufficient proof to show what will happen when Government takes transport in their hands. I am sure death rates will be increased by double or treble and accidents will be at least 10 times more and the charges will be increased twice or thrice the pre-war rates.

Finally, my argument is, that Government should not take any industries in their hands for some more time until they or private persons start the mother industries or until they have sufficient men trained for this purpose. Even then it should be on All-India basis and not Provincial. The first means open to us for this is to start factories for manufacturing machine tools, textile machinery and motor vehicles and to open at least one Polytechnic in each district to train students in the industries, which the Government intend to take over. After thorough training in a particular department for a full term, Government may consider nationalising transport, in the light of the training given to the members, who form the real centre of activity.